

Preface

**Western Placer Agricultural Land Assessment
and
Agricultural Land Conservation
Evaluation Criteria**

This *Western Placer Agricultural Land Assessment and Agricultural Land Conservation Evaluation Criteria* report was prepared to identify a means of achieving Placer County's goal of conserving and protecting valuable agricultural lands. The County received grant assistance through the California Farmland Conservancy Program (CFCP), administered by the State Department of Conservation, to conduct a comprehensive assessment, develop a program to protect valuable agricultural resources, and avoid premature conversion of agricultural lands in the unincorporated areas. The program, when finalized, will assist Placer County in achieving its open space conservation objectives by integrating this public-private agricultural land conservation component into Placer Legacy, the umbrella program of this effort.

The *Western Placer Agricultural Land Assessment and Agricultural Land Conservation Evaluation Criteria* will be used to develop the agricultural land conservation program by providing an integrated planning framework and consensus-based process to identify, define, prioritize and eventually implement actions for protecting and conserving agricultural lands in the western County.

The assessment was prepared, and program development will continue, in consultation with an informal agricultural advisory committee at each phase of the project. The committee is made up of representatives of local growers and ranchers, the Placer County Farm Bureau, the Tahoe Cattleman's Association, PlacerGROWN, Foothill's Farmers' Market, the Placer County Agricultural Commission, and the University of California Cooperative extension. These members provided feedback on land use information, water issues, marketing and processing infrastructure, and conservation priorities.

The study area for the report includes all of south, west and mid Placer County, extending approximately 25 miles east of Auburn (as shown in *Figure i-1*). The boundary of the study area for this report is coterminous with that of "Phase One" of Placer Legacy.

Much of the information contained in the chapters that follow is represented graphically through the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping tools and land use data provided by Placer County Planning Department and the State Departments of Finance and Conservation. The maps provide snapshots of land use, water supply, crop patterns (general), and Williamson Act contract status in the context of political boundaries, water service areas, and land use designations under the various general plans.

FIGURE i-1
Regional Location Map

